

Effective Media Messages and Channels for Rural Smoke-free Policy Media Messaging

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Purpose

- Describe knowledge, attitudes, and exposure to media messages among rural adults.
- Explore perceived effectiveness of existing ads in rural communities
- Recommend additional messages and delivery channels for rural areas



Background

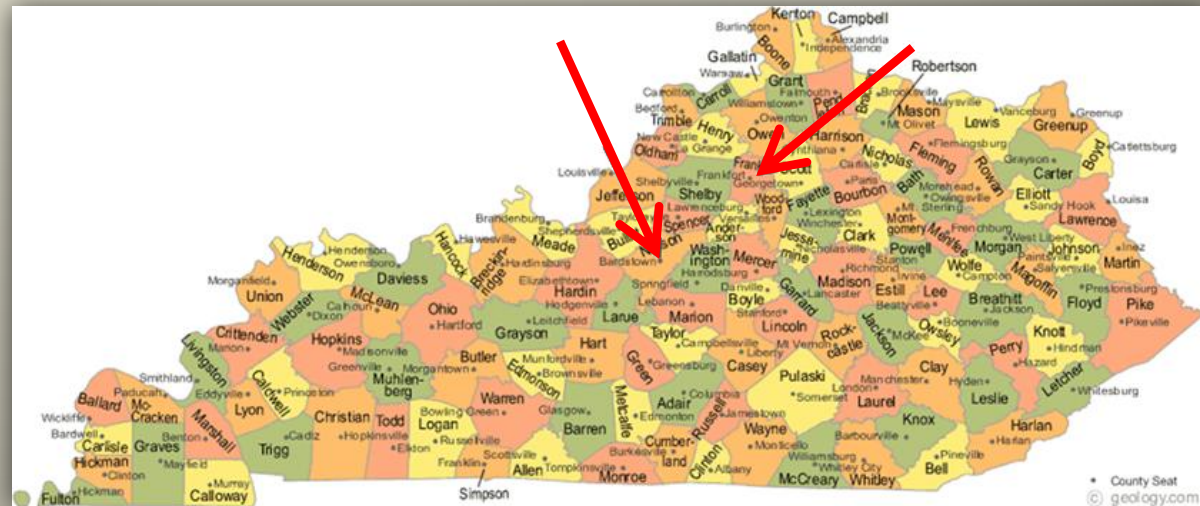
- Part of a 5-year study to test the effects of stage-based, tailored interventions on community readiness and policy outcomes in rural areas.
- Rural populations are disproportionately affected by SHS exposure, tobacco-related disease and premature death.
- Smoke-free laws may seem incompatible with rural values of self-reliance and personal freedoms.
- Culturally sensitive media messages and credible channels are crucial in building demand for smoke-free laws.

Methods

- 4 focus groups ($N = 39$) in two rural counties with smoke-free cities but no county laws
- Community partners located community venues and recruited participants.
- Light meal, child care, \$20 incentive
- Anonymous survey to assess smoking behavior, secondhand smoke (SHS) exposure, attitudes toward SHS and smoke-free policy, exposure to media messaging, and demographics.
- Semi-structured focus group guide

Sample (N = 39)

- 59.0% female
- Mean age group category = 45-54 years
- 34.2% African American
- 74.4% > high school education
- 3 current smokers (7.7%)
- 16.2% grew tobacco or owned property where tobacco grown



Setting

- Group #1: Restaurant (allowed smoking) in small rural town (pop. 850; $n = 5$)
- Group #2: Restaurant (allowed smoking) in small rural town (pop. 865; $n = 7$)
- Group #3: Ruritan Club (smoke-free) in rural neighborhood in the county seat and state capital ($n = 15$)
- Group #4: African American Baptist church in the county seat and state capital (pop. 25,583; $n = 12$)



Measures: Self-report Survey Scales

- **Knowledge:** health effects of SHS (e.g., cancer, heart disease), SHS and quitting (4-pt Likert; 6 items)
- **Support for smoking restrictions in specific locations** (e.g., indoor workplaces, restaurants, bars) (3-pt Likert; 8 items)
- **Rights:** to smoke in public places; to work in smoke-free environment (4-pt Likert; 2 items)
- **Media exposure:** messages on TV, radio, other channels (yes/no; 12 items)
- **Community support:** perceived seriousness of problem, support for smoke-free policy (4-pt. Likert; 3 items)

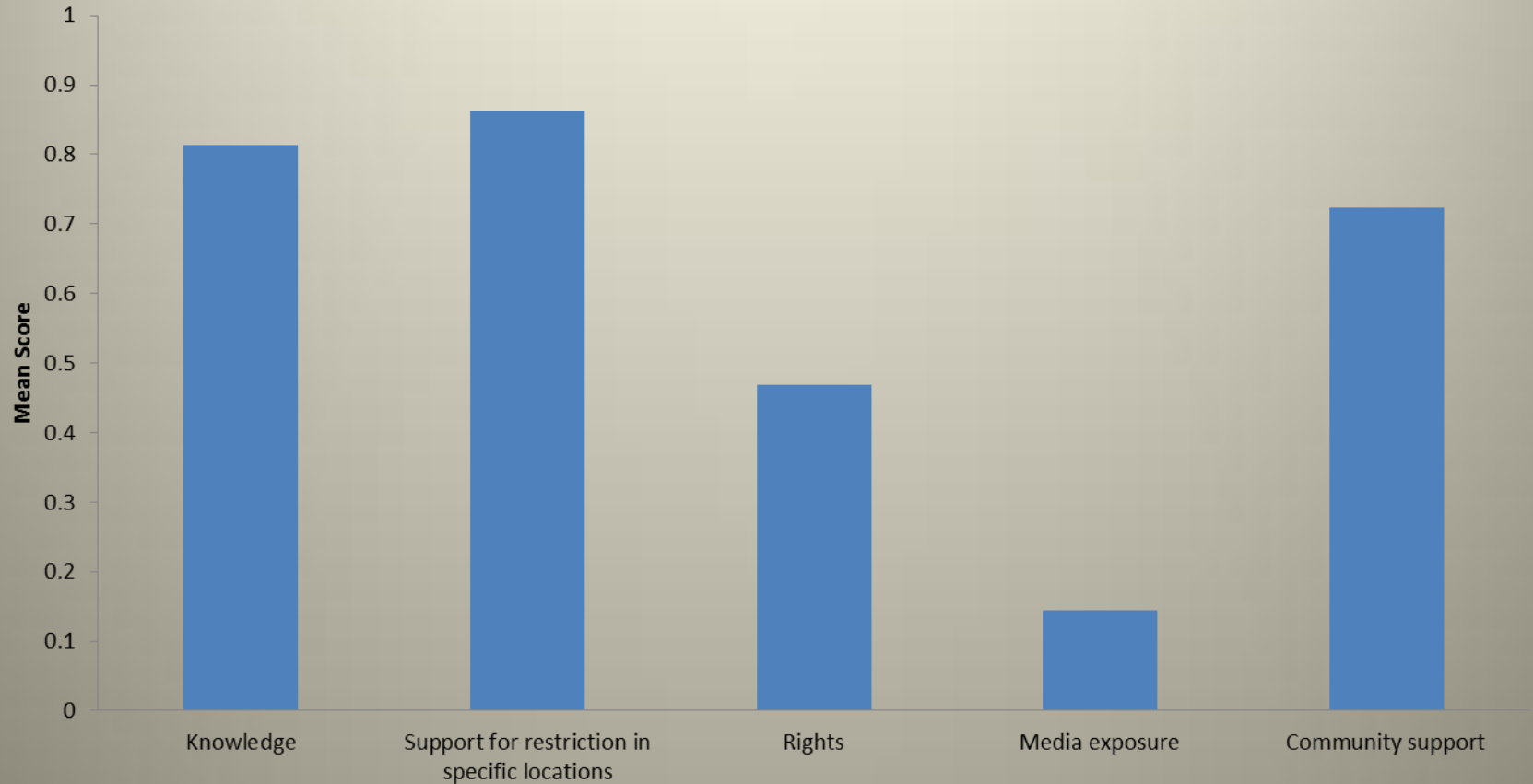
Focus Group Procedures/Measures

1. **Assessed knowledge:** What do you know/have you heard about secondhand smoke (SHS)?
2. **Brief education:** 5-10 minutes of SHS and smoke-free policy information depending on response; varied by site.
3. **Categories of questions:**
 - a. What do you think of efforts by government or businesses to go smoke-free?
 - b. What suggestions do you have for educational materials on SHS and smoke-free policy, both messages and delivery channels?
 - c. Evaluation of smoke-free ads provided regarding content, appeal, and effectiveness

Data Analysis

- Survey data: descriptive statistics (e.g. means, standard deviations, subscale scores)
- Focus group data: Atlas.ti qualitative software and codebook based on emerging themes
 - Two independent coders
 - Percent agreement 84% (every 10th data bit)
 - Content analysis
 - Categories of themes (Message content, characteristics, and delivery channels)

Survey Results ($N = 39$)



Focus Group Results

- 64 themes emerged including
 - Helping smokers quit
 - Preventing youth from starting
 - Dangers of SHS
 - Worker health
 - Nostalgia for the tobacco heritage
 - Tips for creating messages
 - A variety of delivery channels, some unique to the community

Top 10 Content Themes

1) Dangers of smoking (i.e., chemicals, addiction, smoking-related illnesses and consequences, youth smoking)

“It’s hard to believe that the tobacco plant produces all those carcinogens when lettuce and cabbage... growing in the same soil don’t.”

2) Dangers of SHS (i.e., particles, dangerous even if no odor, effects on children)

“The smoke might be out of sight but the particles are still there...and somebody is still inhaling the particles.”

3) Worker Health

“Ineffective to say ‘all you customers have to quit smoking because I work here now.’ ”

Top 10 Content Themes

- 4) Analogies (comparisons to similar situations that may not be as controversial) *“Slavery was also part of our heritage. Women did not have the right to vote was part of our heritage. When we learned it wasn’t a good thing, we stopped. So if we know that tobacco...that’s killing people secondhand, what pride is there in contributing to that?”*
- 5) It’s not about the smoker *“People feel personally attacked.” “Stay focused on the effects more than personalizing.” “It sticks!”*

Top 10 Content Themes

- 6) Effects of policies on restaurants and bars (economic)

“Well they’ve just proved already that they’ve increased- every restaurant in Frankfort.”

- 7) Freedom to live, nonsmokers, and not harming others (ambivalence)

“This is not a violent crime, but just as deadly....As I watched my mom die from Dad’s smoking, I think the government has a right to protect its citizens from that, just as they protect me from someone shooting me.”

Top 10 Content Themes

- 8) Smokers' rights
(ambivalence)

"My rights stop where your rights start, you have the right not to smell the smoke...therefore I shouldn't have to go outside and be in the open air smoking."

- 9) Nostalgia for KY as a tobacco state

"I remember [being] out there with everyone else stripping tobacco; it was good memories of high school days. If you come out against it, it might be like I'm against my own family."



Top 10 Content Themes

10) Business & farmer rights

“If I own it, I have the right to do it [make it smoke-free].”

“I don’t think the Chinese should have to breathe it either, but if the concern is ...putting farmers out of business, I don’t think that’s a legitimate concern...the product is already exported.”

“But you know, what affects them, affects us, because we are one.”



“Big Tobacco has been conning the restaurant business for years. Don’t be a sucker. Go smokefree.”

MICHAEL O’NEAL | O’Neal’s Lincoln Center,
New York City



5
Since the 1980s, the tobacco industry has been lying to the hospitality industry. Why?

To protect its multi-billion dollar annual profits. Smokefree restaurants cost Big Tobacco big money, but it can’t fight local clean indoor air laws openly. So it has lied and recruited the hospitality industry to do the job.

LIE Big Tobacco says smoke-free measures will cost you.

TRUTH All reputable economic studies show smokefree measures do not reduce and may increase restaurant sales.

LIE Big Tobacco says second-hand smoke poses no real risk.

TRUTH Every major health authority in the world agrees secondhand smoke is dangerous.

LIE Big Tobacco says you can “accommodate” smokers with remodels or costly ventilation systems.

TRUTH No feasible ventilation system protects you from legal liability for secondhand smoke.

Get wise to Big Tobacco. For facts and “insider” documents, go online to TobaccoScam.ucsf.edu



TOBACCO Big
scam Tobacco
is lying.
Again.

TobaccoScam is a project of Stanton Glantz, PhD, of the School of Medicine, University of California, San Francisco. San Francisco, CA 94143-0130.

www.PublicMediaCenter.org

Message Characteristics Themes

Short and to the point

“It’s easier to read a couple lines & take it in.”

Large enough to read

“You know it off the bat by that big headline...I wouldn’t read down through there.”

Simple; understandable to those with low literacy

“Words used in everyday speaking.” “Maybe a picture and a big word.”

Graphics:

*+ “Child playing on Daddy’s grave” (emotional)
- “People miss the smoke-free message because of harsh pictures [autopsy]”*

Message Characteristics Themes

Personal stories

Statistics, charts, graphs:

Message delivered by local authority figure

"If more people heard a story like that, they might jump in."
+ Heart disease ad that reads: "5 minutes, 10 minutes, ..."
+ [Ad with Air Quality graph]
"...you have statistics and that cuts off a lot of [argument]"
- "[Business owner ads] don't hit home; need to tell a [local] story."
"Instead of the Surgeon General, use a local medical person."

Message Characteristics Themes

Message delivered by youth,
someone 'relatable'

*"If I seen somebody in
there I know, I'd read the
whole page."*

Messages target community

*"You have to get up into those
rural areas....up in those
hollows."*

*"Some messages will target
young, some more mature;
It's ...a scattergun approach in
order to get all groups and all
access points..."*

Delivery Channel Themes

Newspapers

“...the very front page of the Standard when they put on this little sticker”

“Absolutely, KY Standard.”

“There’s a lot of people who don’t even pick up the Shopper’s Guide.”

Technology/Internet:
facebook and other media

“Everyone’s on it, chatting.”

“Someone just got diagnosed with breast cancer...and people were facebooking.”

“Set up facebook, twitter, and a YouTube account and link them together.” “Keep it fresh.”

Delivery Channel Themes

Radio	<i>"The local AM station"</i>
Billboards	<i>"In an easy place to read (near stoplight or where leaving campus)"</i>
Television	<i>Local cable: "News time is OK and [local sports broadcasts]"</i> <i>"Not commercials...sometimes you're just muting them"</i> <i>"The major issue is not so much the message [issues are the same] but make sure Boyle County hears its name."</i>

Delivery Channel Themes

Print Materials

“...send it in a [utility] bill, so when they open it they got a smoke-free message.”

“little poster wherever smoking is not allowed”

“bumper stickers”

“Anyplace where people have to sit and wait”

A Few Products

- Results were used to create
 - a lift-off sticker for the front page of the newspaper.
 - Radio PSAs to be read by local people known to the community



A grayscale image of a person's silhouette against a dark background. White smoke or vapor is rising from the person's head and hands, swirling upwards. The smoke is thick and billowing, creating a sense of movement and intensity. The overall mood is somber and contemplative, suggesting themes of addiction, stress, or mental health.

**IT'S NOT
THE SMOKER**

**IT'S THE
SMOKE**

**“LIKE” US ON
facebook®**

Smoke-Free Nelson County

Radio PSA

Messenger: Farmer

- *Many of us remember working tobacco with our family and friends. But now we know the damage tobacco smoke does to people's health. I used to house tobacco and now I don't allow tobacco in the house! In fact, allowing Nelson County workers to inhale smoke on the job tarnishes our treasured tobacco heritage.*



Radio PSA



Messenger: Waitress/Bartender

- *I was a server in a restaurant and a bartender for a long time and I couldn't just leave my job. For people to say, "Well just go and get another job," it wasn't realistic for me. The management treated me well and the job was close to home, so I didn't spend much on gas. Even if I could have moved, there were few bartending jobs that were smoke-free. Moving jobs wasn't an option for me at the time, but I wanted my health protected. There are lots of reasons people take particular jobs and they shouldn't have to work in secondhand smoke to keep a job.*

Discussion

- Some participants lacked even the most basic information about SHS.
- It was difficult for participants to separate the issues of smoking/youth smoking from SHS issues.
- Loyalty to farmers and the tobacco heritage is strong.
- Messages must be short, simple, and reflect local situations/people.
- Rural residents have keen insights into messaging and delivery channels and channels vary from community to community.
- “Scattergun” approach and social media recommended to catch a variety of people.

Questions?

- Kentucky Center for Smoke-free Policy
- www.kcsp.uky.edu
- Follow us @kysmokefree  
- 859-323-4587

